

6-18-86 Steve The article is telling you about Dick Kaufman B & V

NG GUIDE

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SUPERFUND RECORDS

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A father again

When Dad is gone, some
grandfathers must fill
his shoes.

Section C



THE KANSAS CITY

228

★ ★ Sunday morning, June 15, 1986, Metro Edition, 30 sections, including STAR mag

dental Pétroleum Corp.,
mer, engaged last week in
sonal diplomacy aimed at
ummit schedule back on

Bob Dole. Miss Davis now is attending a
sign language course that may lead to a
career helping teach the deaf.

Similar success tales will be told
Monday night in Washington at a posh

Spinks will be honored for his work with
mentally retarded children and other
celebrities, including professional foot-
ball players and lawmakers, will be
spotlighted at the gala.

was one of 21 grants
October, totaling more
This week the founda
expected to approve

Holden's unhealthy problem: A warehouse filled with PCBs

By Barbara Musfeldt

The Star's energy/environment writer

Holden, Mo.—Residents trailing
trucks after dark, a fisherman
snagging a transformer in a lake,
a locked room full of toxic capacitors.

It's been an interesting year in Hol-
den.

On the western edge of this Johnson
County town of more than 2,000, behind
a little white sign painted with a delicate
red rose, is an environmental mess that
could take two years and \$20 million to
clean up.

City officials have been keeping track
of the unusual developments involving a
PCB disposal plant, but what they
feared would happen in Holden has.

The Martha C. Rose Chemicals Inc.
plant sits idle today, except for a hand-
ful of environmental officials and clean-
up contractors trying to take stock of the

thousands of drums of wastes in a
100,000-square-foot metal building.

The plant once disposed of wastes
contaminated with PCBs (polychlorinat-
ed biphenyls) for hundreds of utilities
and other industrial firms across the
country.

"It's like having a big time bomb
sitting on the edge of your town," said
Holden Mayor Francis Brillhart, whose
Arrowhead Real Estate office sits with-
in half a block of the Rose plant.

It wouldn't be that way if it weren't
for a federal agency gone overboard and
a town gone paranoid, according to Rose
officials, who say they don't have all the
money to clean it up. The U.S. Environ-
mental Protection Agency and the city
"precluded us from solving our prob-
lems," said Executive Vice President
James Carolan.

See PCB, pg. 14A, col. 1

Transp Baby Fae'

By Rick Montgomery
staff writer

This time the ne
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Jesse was rec
fornia with a new he
Calvin in Kentucky.

Teresa, 25, is a c
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20 months ago.

She named her bab
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Baby Fae, the 5-po
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"I think Stephanie
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Calvins," Teresa s
makes me feel good."

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increased.
PROVERBS 9:11.

Paul Mann

EX
PAGE 3A

No one denies those problems:

- Nearby Pin Oak Creek, and the fish that swim in it, have been contaminated with PCB wastes. Environmental officials fear the creek has contaminated the Blackwater River, a source of water for at least one community, Sweet Springs.

- Thousands of barrels, wooden crates and rusted tanks—containing an estimated 15 million pounds of PCB wastes—sit at the plant, and environmental officials fear they will rupture or leak.

- Across a field of orchard grass from the plant, the city's wastewater treatment plant also is contaminated with PCBs and filled to the brim with sludge that nobody wants.

The EPA says the Rose site poses an "imminent and substantial endangerment to the public health and environment."

Prickly past

To city officials Rose's legacy is a thorn—environmentally, politically and financially.

Rose came to Holden in 1982, moving into a building owned by the city. City officials said Rose told them it was going to make dust-suppressant equipment, but began taking PCB wastes on the sly.

An accident in October 1983 drew police and firefighters to the plant, where several were overcome by fumes and city officials began to ask questions, Mr. Brillhart said.

Rose officials deny they kept the PCB processing a secret.

"We have copies of letters sent to the city to tell them what we were doing," Mr. Carolan said.

PCBs are heat-resistant compounds used principally as coolant oil in transformers, capacitors and other electric equipment.

Now banned as hazardous to health, PCBs have been linked to skin, liver and nervous disorders and are suspected of causing cancer and birth defects.

Before the Rose plant closed in March, some city officials went to seminars conducted by the EPA to explain handling of PCBs.

A dedicated group of vigilantes—the mayor, several council members and others—also tried, unsuccessfully, to keep track of waste by following Rose trucks leaving the plant after dark. Rose officials said there were no secrets to discover.

The mayor has kept a green spiral notebook where he logs complaints and observations about Rose, and admittedly what could be rumors.

He made note of a "secret room" at the plant where a door always was kept locked. EPA investigators said that when they entered the locked room during an inspection, they found stacks

of capacitor cores, among the most contaminated materials.

Mr. Carolan and Dwight Thomas, director of research and development for Rose, said there is a room at the plant with capacitor cores, but it was far from secret.

Then there was the report of a local fisherman who pulled in a big one—a transformer casing—out at Lazy Lake this spring. Environmental officials found several other casings in the water.

Rose officials said the transformer casings in the lake weren't put there by their company.

Councilman Dick Rodman said he toured the plant once, when Rose officials were attempting to convince the town to let them build a \$5 million incinerator to destroy wastes on-site. Rose had been shipping wastes to one of four commercial incinerators in the country.

Mr. Rodman said he was startled. "The first thing I saw was two drums, both of them dated 18 months back," he said. EPA regulations stipulate PCB wastes cannot be held longer than a year at the site.

Mr. Rodman said he worried that a leak in one of the thousands of 55-gallon drums would go undetected. "They were neatly stacked, but neatly packed solid," he said.

Rose officials agreed wastes have piled up because the EPA and city would not let them build the incinerator—a denial they say eventually closed the plant.

"We warned the city and the EPA we would be running into this problem," Mr. Carolan said. "We offered them an alternative, the incinerator, but they wouldn't take it."

The mayor said 1,446 of the town's 2,195 residents signed a petition against construction of the incinerator.

Fueling their opposition were penalties against Rose by the EPA for improper handling of PCB wastes.

Eventually the city filed a \$300,000 lawsuit against Rose, alleging the company contaminated its wastewater treatment plant. Rose filed a counterclaim seeking \$14.5 million, alleging the city restrained its trade.

Costly cleanup

Violations discovered during recent inspections prompted the EPA to file an administrative order against the company.

The order alleges Rose allowed PCB-contaminated water to be released into the city sewer system; that wastes being sent off-site were still contaminated; and that about 2,600 gallons of contaminated oil leaked from a ruptured tank truck down to the Pin Oak Creek.

Drums marked with yellow "Caution—Contain PCBs" stickers collect material at the end of a pipe leading

from the plant to the creek. Bales of hay line the creek, sopping up the oily sheen.

EPA officials are unsure if a health hazard is posed by the spill.

But the agency has ordered Rose to post a security guard around the plant; to fence it and post warning signs; to set up a warning system to notify officials of spills or other accidents; to develop a plan to sample contamination; and to determine a system to inventory the wastes and dispose of them.

Hazardous waste contractors and EPA officials have estimated cleanup could cost from \$15 million to \$20 million and could take years.

Meanwhile, city officials are trying to figure out what to do with the sludge at the city plant. Because it is slightly contaminated with PCBs, they can't give it away to farmers as fertilizer and other treatment plants won't accept it, said Tony Lerda, who manages the system for the city.

Mr. Brillhart said in two or three weeks the treatment plant may well reach the breaking point.

The city's annual budget of \$371,000 would hardly cover what it would take to clean up the plant, the mayor said.

"Got a million dollars you don't need?" drawled Councilman Jim Williams.

At the Rose plant, the company will do what is "economically possible and feasible," to clean up the site, Mr. Carolan said.

But companies that sent materials to the site are worried about what that means.

"They (the companies) are responsible for not only their material, but for the site, as well," said William Spratlin, director of EPA's regional air and toxics division.

KPL Gas Service is one of 11 large utility companies wondering what has happened with all the material it thought Rose was handling.

Tom Taylor, a spokesman for KPL, said the company has sent a "substantial" amount of material to Rose.

Toll reaches 21 in bus crash

By The Associated Press

Reno, Nev.—A woman died Saturday of injuries she received in the May 30 crash of a Southern California tour bus, bringing the apparent death toll to 21 and making the bus accident the second-worst in U.S. history.

Ruth Hulderman, 70, of Santa Monica, Calif., died after being listed in serious and unresponsive condition for several days at St. Mary's Hospital. Mrs. Hulderman's husband John, 85, was listed as killed in the crash of the bus into the surging Walker River near Walker, Calif. Twenty others were injured.

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